

Agency 54 - Nebraska State Historical Society

Statutory Authority:

The Society was first organized in 1878 as a private, non-profit corporation. In 1883 it was designated an institution of state government. In 1994 the Society became an independent state agency. The Society has been given authority to fulfill its missions by Chapter 82 (as amended), Sections 101-118 of the Revised Statutes and by related laws, including those concerning the Historical Markers Program, Chapter 82-201-206; the Records Management Act, Chapter 82-1202-1216; and the Hall of Fame Commission, Chapter 72, Sections 728-729.01.

Vision Statement:

The Society's vision is most fully articulated in the Nebraska State Historical Society Strategic Plan, that was adopted by the Society Board of Trustees on March 15, 1996 and updated in June 1998. The plan outlines the results of a two-year effort by staff, the Board of Trustees, the Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation (NSHS Foundation), consultants, and various constituent groups to evaluate every aspect of Society operations and provide overall direction for the Society throughout the 1990's and into the next century.

Mission Statement:

The Society holds the following institutional values: 1) Preserving the wide array of historical resources that comprise the legacy and experiences of past Nebraskans, including--but not limited to--books, documents, manuscripts, objects, oral traditions, photographs and audio-visual materials, sites, and structures; 2) Interpreting Nebraska history in a manner that educates and enlightens our citizens; and 3) Providing public access to Society resources and services and promoting inquiry, dialogue, and diversity of opinion and support.

Goals:

1. To collect and preserve the finest and most comprehensive tangible and intangible collections, including historic sites, reflecting the history and culture of Nebraska and its people.
2. To provide the greatest possible access to society resources and services.
3. To identify and build new audiences and constituencies.
4. To position the society as the resource for Nebraska history.
5. To administer the society in the most efficient and responsive manner to achieve the mission and meet the needs of constituents and staff.
6. To provide and maintain high-quality facilities for all society activities.
7. To maintain an adequate, stable and diversified base of financial support for the society's mission.

Financial Data:

	Actual FY98	Approp FY99	Request FY00	Recom FY00	Request FY01	Recom FY01
General Fund	3,381,232	3,574,554	4,323,868	3,705,795	4,497,400	3,861,416
Cash Fund	510,978	888,562	1,101,859	891,289	1,109,652	907,125
Federal Fund	371,545	417,636	430,246	417,371	443,685	439,004
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Agency	4,263,755	4,880,752	5,855,973	5,014,455	6,050,737	5,207,545

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Program 542 - Historic Sites

Program Objectives:

The mission of the Nebraska State Historical Society Museum/Historic Sites Division is to educate people about Nebraska's past through historic artifacts and historic places. These historic places are brought to life through the careful preservation and interpretation of the premier artifacts relating to each site, particularly their historic structures. The Historic Sites Program preserves and interprets seven historic sites across Nebraska. The broad range of stories told at the sites reflects the amazing diversity of Nebraska history.

Financial Data:

	Actual FY98	Approp FY99	Request FY00	Recom FY00	Request FY01	Recom FY01
General Fund	536,012	550,557	643,364	0	657,274	0
Cash Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Agency	536,012	550,557	643,364	0	657,274	0

Performance Measures:

The most important evaluation tool the historic sites program has is the continued support of steady visitation. Over 85,400 people visited the sites during the 1997-98 fiscal year. Many visitors have direct relationships with the people and events that are the focus of the historic sites and their comments are telling. Veterans returning to Fort Robinson express their appreciation for the efforts to preserve and interpret the post's history. People who are familiar with the work of John G. Neihardt, Willa Cather, or George Norris are pleased with the continued importance placed on their legacy. Public response to special events at the historic sites continues to be positive. The "Sunday Afternoon at the Rock" speakers series has drawn standing room only audiences each of the first two years it has been offered at the Chimney Rock National Historic Site. The second Fort Robinson History Conference was sold out. Pastimes and Playthings draws students and families to the Thomas P. Kennard House and the Willa Cather State Historic Site. This event has proven so popular that other sites are planning to offer it in the future. The quilt and needlework shows at the Senator George Norris State Historic Site are the most heavily visited times of the year. Written visitor comments are encouraged at each site in their visitor register. Visitor evaluation forms have been developed and are in use at each site providing valuable information regarding visitor likes and dislikes. Evaluation responses are tabulated on a monthly basis, disseminated to the staff, and play an important role in the development of new, and reassessment of old, offerings at each site.

Governor's Recommendation Includes:

The Governor's recommendation merges this program into Program 648.

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Program 647 - Skeletal Remains Protection Act

Program Objectives:

LB 340, the Unmarked Human Burial Sites and Skeletal Remains Protection Act and related federal legislation, requires the Nebraska State Historical Society (NSHS) to carry out specific duties when unmarked human remains are located. When such remains are encountered, local law enforcement officials are to be contacted and a determination of whether criminal activity is involved is made. Law enforcement or the county attorney is required to contact the NSHS so that we may promptly examine the material to determine the origin and identify the remains.

Financial Data:

	Actual FY98	Approp FY99	Request FY00	Recom FY00	Request FY01	Recom FY01
General Fund	6,294	6,000	14,843	0	15,611	0
Cash Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Agency	6,294	6,000	14,843	0	15,611	0

Performance Measures:

Archeological staff have consulted with law enforcement personnel on an as-needed basis; 8-10 cases per year is standard. Materials have been repatriated to associated tribal groups, and federal deadlines have been met.

Governor's Recommendation Includes:

The Governor's recommendation merges this program into Program 648.

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Program 648 - Nebraska State Historical Society

Program Objectives:

The Nebraska State Historical Society has primary responsibility for the preservation of Nebraska's history. The Society has been given authority to fulfill its mission by Chapter 82 (as amended) Sections 101-118 of the Revised Statutes and by related laws.

As an agency of state government, the Society holds all of its collections in trust for the state and has all the authority granted to it by law.

Financial Data:

	Actual FY98	Approp FY99	Request FY00	Recom FY00	Request FY01	Recom FY01
General Fund	2,838,926	3,017,997	3,665,661	3,705,795	3,824,515	3,861,416
Cash Fund	510,978	888,562	1,101,859	891,289	1,109,652	907,125
Federal Fund	371,545	417,636	430,246	417,371	443,685	439,004
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Agency	3,721,449	4,324,195	5,197,766	5,014,455	5,377,852	5,207,545

Performance Measures:

Research and Publications: Objectives include publication of four issues annually of the magazine, Nebraska History; one or two special publications annually in a traditional or nontraditional format; installation of one priority historical marker each year, along with up to ten markers initiated by local sponsors.

Library/Archives: Statistical and qualitative measures are used. Included in the statistical category are indicators such as annual compilations of people using the Reference Room, correspondents, collections retrieved, microfilm reels produced, collections accessioned and added to our holdings, finding aids developed, and outreach efforts.

Museum Divisions: Over 147,000 visitors encountered the past directly at the Society's museums and sites; many thousands more were reached by outreach in print, broadcast, and public programming form. The museum was reaccredited by the American Association of Museums in 1997, a standard which fewer than 800 museums nationwide have met.

Archeology: The majority of division output relates to Department of Roads projects. During FY97/98, over 400 projects were inspected and nearly 100 previously unknown archeological sites were discovered.

Ford Conservation Center: Success of the activities of the Ford Center can be measured in the numbers of individuals exposed to collection care issues and the numbers of collection objects examined, assessed, preserved, and treated over time.